3-month summary

- The chances of either a cool or warm spring are similar to normal.
- Cold weather-related impacts, such as snow and ice, are possible and are more likely in March.
- The likelihoods of either a wet or dry spring are similar.
- The chance of a calm spring is slightly higher than normal.

3-month likelihood of impact

Temperature

15% chance the season will be COOL	60% chance the season will be NEAR AVERAGE	25% chance the season will be WARM
0.8× the normal chance	1.0× the normal chance	1.3× the normal chance

Precipitation

25% chance the season will be DRY	55% chance the season will be NEAR AVERAGE	20% chance the season will be WET
1.3× the normal chance	0.9× the normal chance	1.0× the normal chance

Wind speed

25% chance the season will be CALM	60% chance the season will be NEAR AVERAGE	15% chance the season will be WINDY
1.3× the normal chance	1.0× the normal chance	0.8× the normal chance

1-month summary

- The chance of a wet month is approximately similar to normal.
- The likelihood of a cold month is close to normal.
- However, impacts from rainfall and cold weather, such as snow and ice, are still possible during March.
- Chance of a windy March is moderately lower than normal.

1-month likelihood of impact

Temperature

25% chance the month will be COLD	60% chance the month will be NEAR AVERAGE	15% chance the month will be MILD
1.3× the normal chance	1.0× the normal chance	0.8× the normal chance

Precipitation

10% chance the month will be DRY	65% chance the month will be NEAR AVERAGE	25% chance the month will be WET
0.5× the normal chance	1.1× the normal chance	1.3× the normal chance

Wind speed

20% chance the month will be CALM	65% chance the month will be NEAR AVERAGE	15% chance the month will be WINDY
1.0× the normal chance	1.1× the normal chance	0.8× the normal chance

Understanding the Outlook

The Outlook uses 3 categories for possible UK temperature, precipitation and wind speed in the next 1 and 3 months:

COLD, NEAR AVERAGE and MILD for 1-month temperature
COOL, NEAR AVERAGE and WARM for 3-month temperature
WET, NEAR AVERAGE and DRY for precipitation
CALM, NEAR AVERAGE and WINDY for wind speed

These are linked to observed UK conditions in past years. The NEAR AVERAGE category represents typical conditions for the period and has a normal likelihood of 60%. The higher and lower categories represent more unusual conditions that are more likely to produce impacts. Each has a normal likelihood of 20%.

The Outlook shows how the chances of occurrence of the categories differ from normal, based on knowledge of expected global meteorological patterns. It does not identify which category will actually occur.

Same 3-month period over the last 10 years

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
WARM	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	WARM	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	WARM	COOL	WARM	NEAR AVERAGE
NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	DRY	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	DRY	NEAR AVERAGE	DRY	NEAR AVERAGE
NEAR AVERAGE	WINDY	CALM	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	CALM	CALM	CALM

Same 1-month period over the last 10 years

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	MILD	COLD	MILD	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE
NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	WET	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	DRY	WET
NEAR AVERAGE	WINDY	CALM	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	WINDY	NEAR AVERAGE	NEAR AVERAGE	CALM	NEAR AVERAGE

Outlook in context

Drivers of UK weather for March to May
Global weather patterns can affect UK weather during the coming season and their influence acts to shift the chances of the categories in the Outlook. However, the influence of some of these drivers on the UK climate usually diminishes later in this period.
Drivers relevant to the current Outlook include:
• The warming of UK climate consistent with wider global warming trends.
• An ongoing El Niño event, which increases the likelihood of cold and dry conditions.
• An easterly phase of the Quasi-Biennial Oscillation reduces the strength of westerly winds.
• A weak polar stratospheric flow, which also reduces the strength of westerly winds.

Long-range weather predictions
The Met Office and other prediction centres around the world routinely produce long-range forecasts of conditions in the months ahead. There are indications that, during March, there are moderately greater-than usual chances of low pressure over or to the south of the UK with high pressure to the north or northwest. This would slightly increase the chance of northerly or easterly winds and increase the chances of colder, wetter conditions. Later in the 3-month period, signals become weak.

Impacts
The relatively modest signal for weather patterns that would bring colder weather early in the period is offset by the warming of UK climate in recent years. As a result, the risk of cold conditions is close to normal, with no significant increase in the chance of a cold March. Despite this, it should be borne in mind that weather related impacts such as those from snow and ice do remain possible, particularly in the north. Given the state of the ground following the wet weather so far this winter, there is an increased chance of impacts from heavy rain during March. Later in the period, signals overall are weak, and the chances of abnormal weather conditions are therefore close to normal.

Outlook compared to normal likelihood

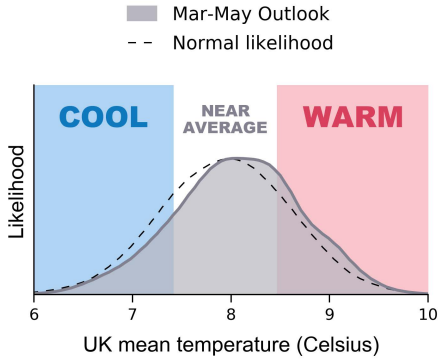
The curves below show the likelihood of the 1- and 3-month average temperature, precipitation and wind speed taking specific values. In each case:

- The dashed curve shows the normal likelihood based on how often each value has been recorded in past years
- The solid curve shows the current likelihood based on the Outlook for this year

The differences in these curves show how the probabilities for the coming periods differ compared to past years. Where the solid curve (corresponding to this year's Outlook) lies above the dashed curve (normal likelihood), the temperature, precipitation or wind speed at that point has a greater-than-normal likelihood of occurring. Likewise, wherever it is below the dashed curve, the likelihood of those values is less than normal.

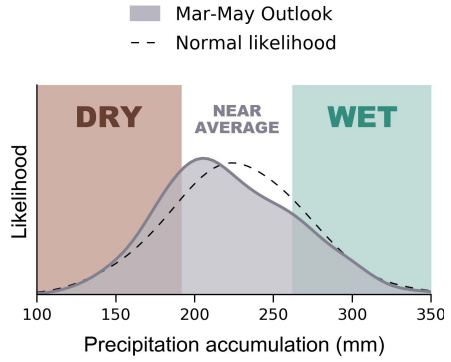
A shift of the solid curve to the left of the dashed curve indicates an increase in the chances of below-average temperature, rainfall or winds. A shift to the right, meanwhile, indicates increased chances of above-average values.

3-month temperature Outlook compared to normal



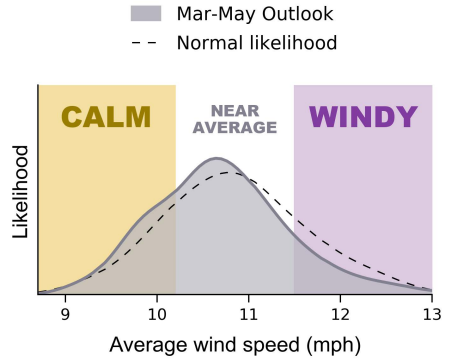
Balanced chances of cool or warm

3-month precipitation Outlook compared to normal



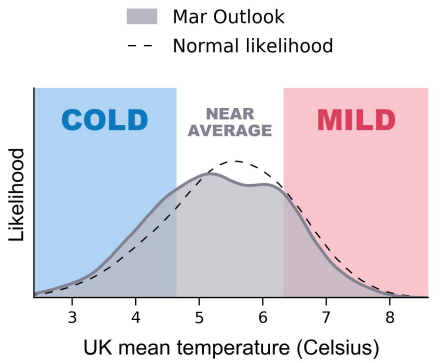
Slight lean towards dry

3-month wind speed Outlook compared to normal



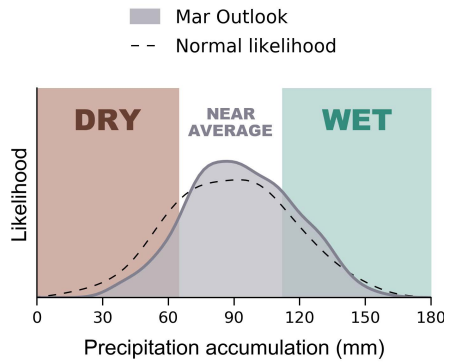
Slight lean towards calm

1-month temperature Outlook compared to normal



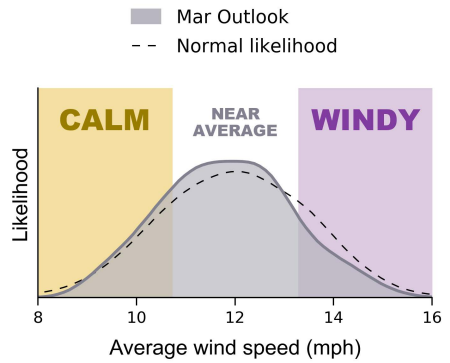
Balanced liklihood of cold and mild

1-month precipitation Outlook compared to normal



Balanced liklihood of wet and dry

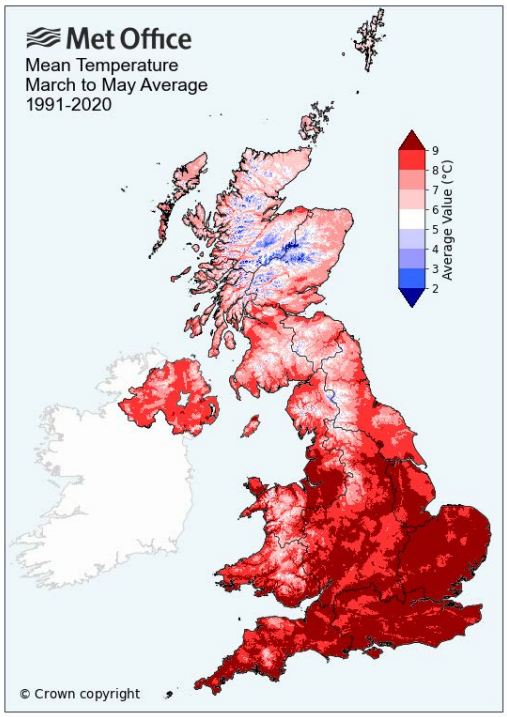
1-month wind speed Outlook compared to normal



Slight lean away from windy

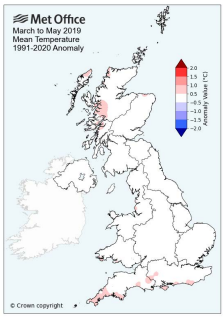
Long-term average temperatures (3-month)

This page shows the long-term average temperatures across the UK applicable to the 3-month Outlook period.

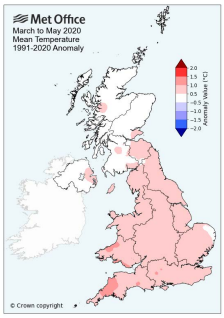


Average temperatures for March - May based on observations of past years.

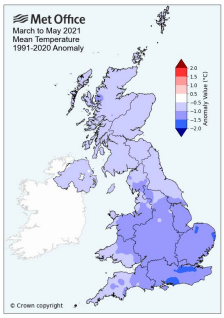
Last 5 years temperatures, difference from average (3-month)



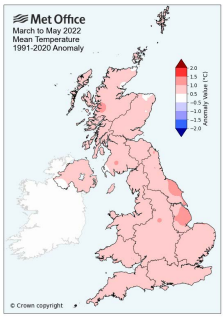
Mar - May 2019



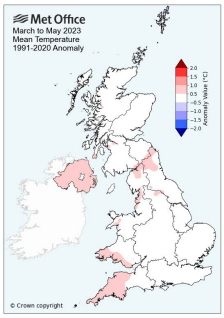
Mar - May 2020



Mar - May 2021



Mar - May 2022



Mar - May 2023

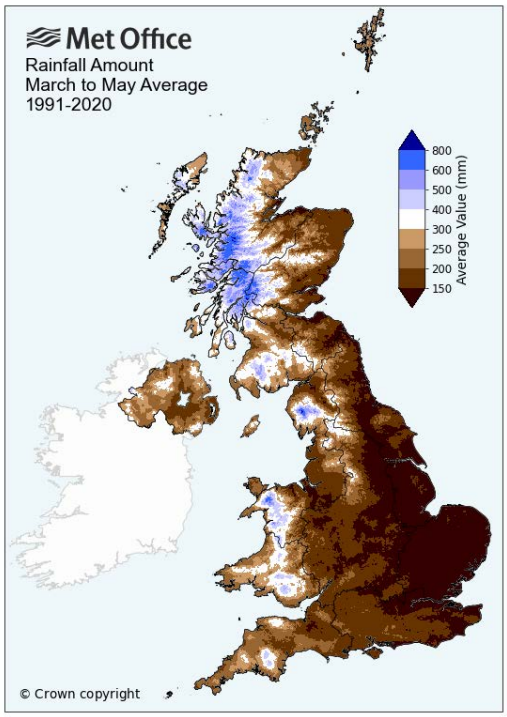
Anomaly (°C)

< -2.0	-2.0 to -1.5	-1.5 to -1.0	-1.0 to-0.5	-0.5 to 0.5	0.5 to 1.0	1.0 to 1.5	1.5 to 2.0	> 2.0

These maps show how March - May temperatures in the last five years differed from the long-term average temperatures shown above in the upper panel. Pink and red colours indicate warmer-than-average conditions while blue shades indicate cooler-than-average conditions. Detailed information on the climate of the UK is available at www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate.

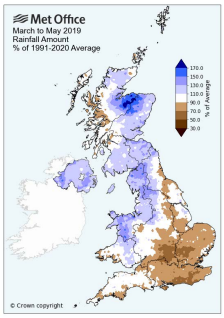
Long-term average precipitation (3-month)

This page shows the long-term average precipitation across the UK applicable to the 3-month Outlook period.

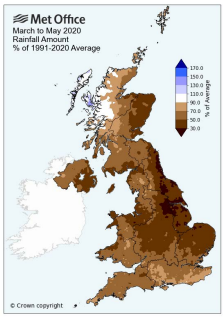


Average precipitation for March - May based on observations of past years.

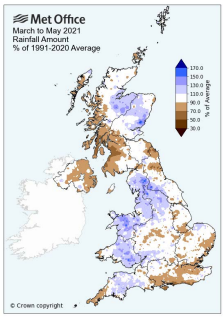
Last 5 years precipitation, difference from average (3-month)



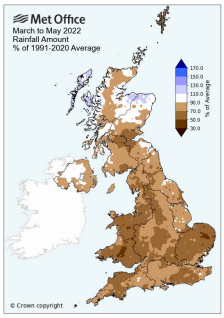
Mar - May 2019



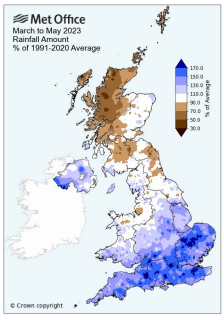
Mar - May 2020



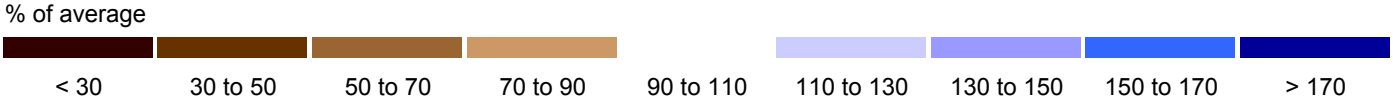
Mar - May 2021



Mar - May 2022



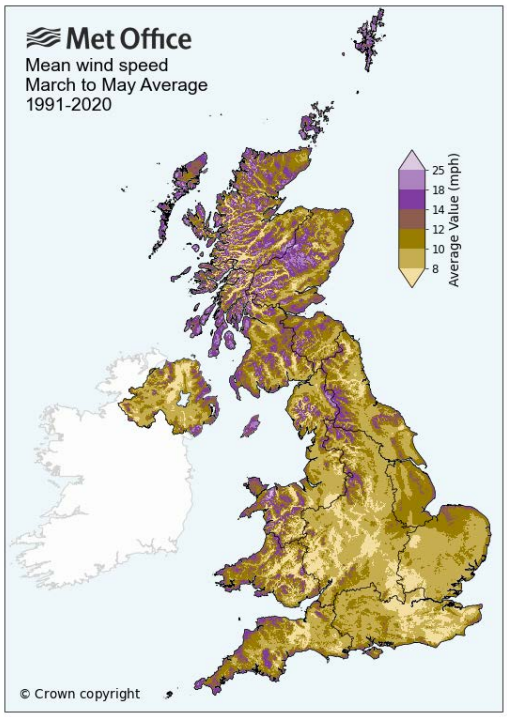
Mar - May 2023



These maps show how March - May precipitation in the last five years differed from the long-term average precipitation shown above in the upper panel. Brown colours indicate drier-than-average conditions while blue shades indicate wetter-than-average conditions. Detailed information on the climate of the UK is available at www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate.

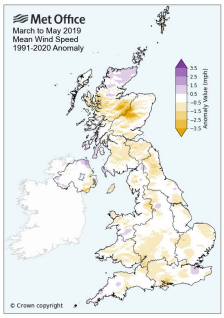
Long-term average wind speed (3-month)

This page shows the long-term average wind speed across the UK applicable to the 3-month Outlook period.

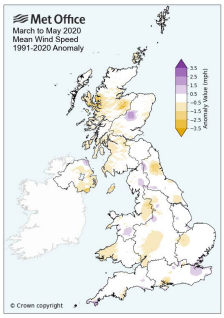


Average wind speed for March - May based on observations of past years.

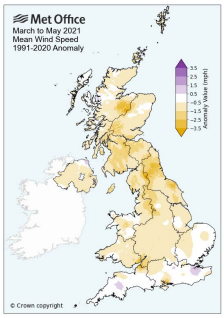
Last 5 years wind speed, difference from average (3-month)



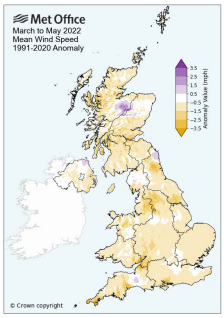
Mar - May 2019



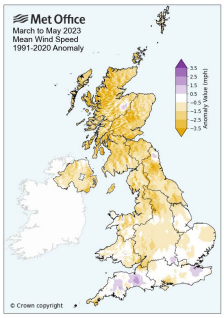
Mar - May 2020



Mar - May 2021



Mar - May 2022



Mar - May 2023

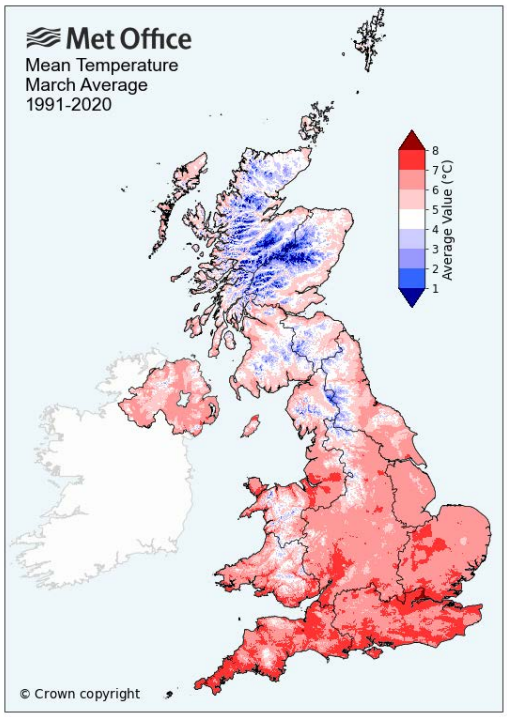
Anomaly (mph)

< -3.5	-3.5 to -2.5	-2.5 to -1.5	-1.5 to -0.5	-0.5 to 0.5	0.5 to 1.5	1.5 to 2.5	2.5 to 3.5	> 3.5

These maps show how March - May wind speed in the last five years differed from the long-term average wind speeds shown above in the upper panel. Yellow colours indicate calmer-than-average conditions while purple shades indicate windier-than-average conditions. Detailed information on the climate of the UK is available at www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate.

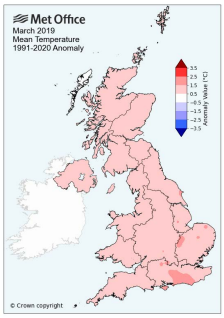
Long-term average temperatures (1-month)

This page shows the long-term average temperatures across the UK applicable to the 1-month Outlook period.

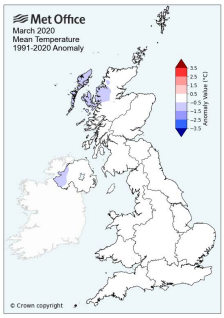


Average temperatures for March based on observations of past years.

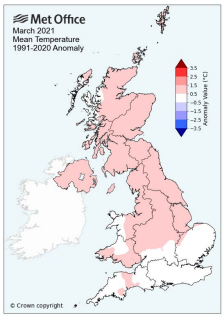
Last 5 years temperatures, difference from average (1-month)



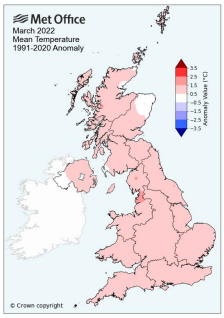
Mar 2019



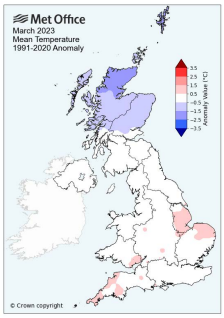
Mar 2020



Mar 2021



Mar 2022



Mar 2023

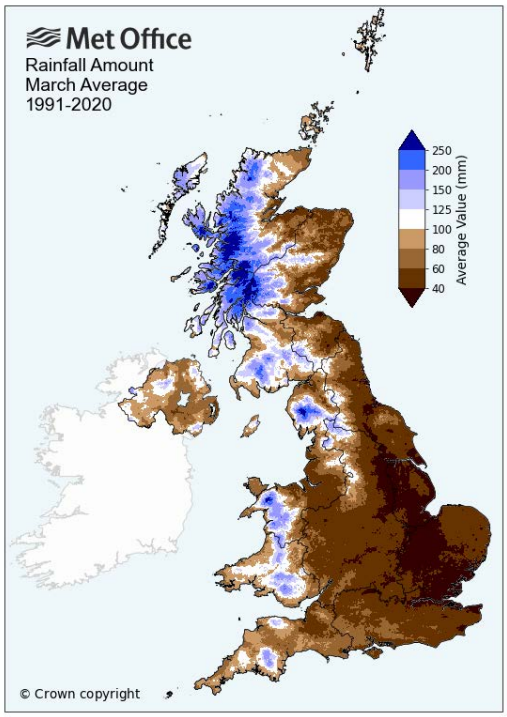
Anomaly (°C)

< -3.5	-3.5 to -2.5	-2.5 to -1.5	-1.5 to -0.5	-0.5 to 0.5	0.5 to 1.5	1.5 to 2.5	2.5 to 3.5	> 3.5

These maps show how March temperatures in the last five years differed from the long-term average temperatures shown above in the upper panel. Pink and red colours indicate milder-than-average conditions while blue shades indicate colder-than-average conditions. Detailed information on the climate of the UK is available at www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate.

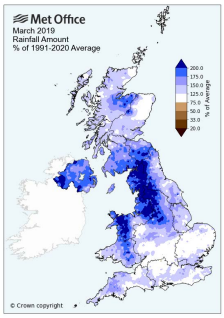
Long-term average precipitation (1-month)

This page shows the long-term average precipitation across the UK applicable to the 1-month Outlook period.

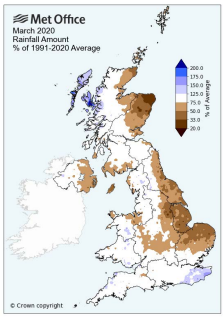


Average precipitation for March based on observations of past years.

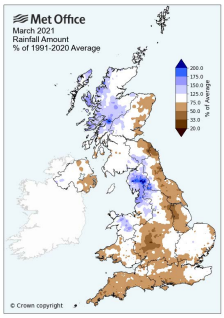
Last 5 years precipitation, difference from average (1-month)



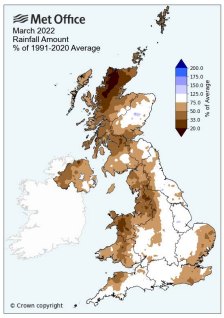
Mar 2019



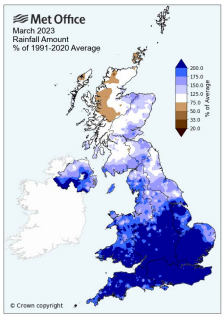
Mar 2020



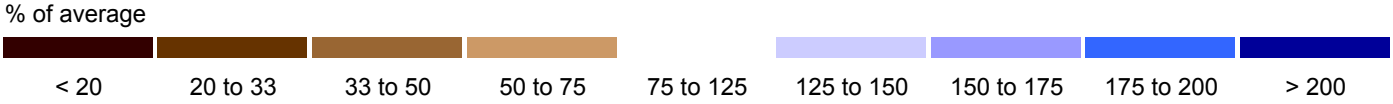
Mar 2021



Mar 2022



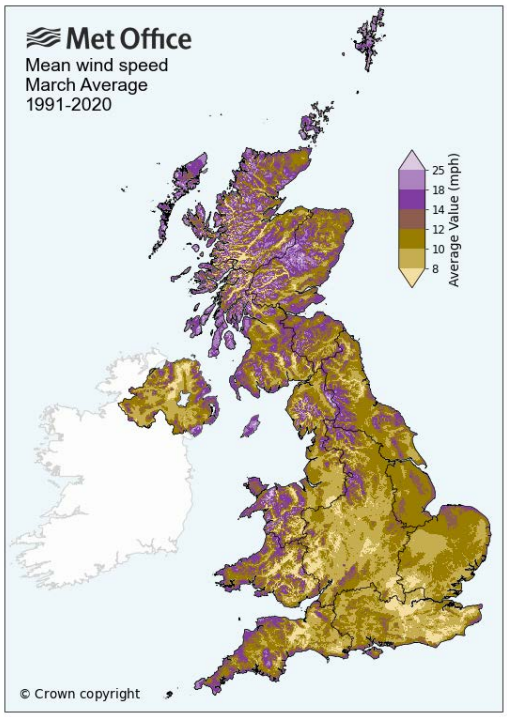
Mar 2023



These maps show how March precipitation in the last five years differed from the long-term average precipitation shown above in the upper panel. Brown colours indicate drier-than-average conditions while blue shades indicate wetter-than-average conditions. Detailed information on the climate of the UK is available at www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate.

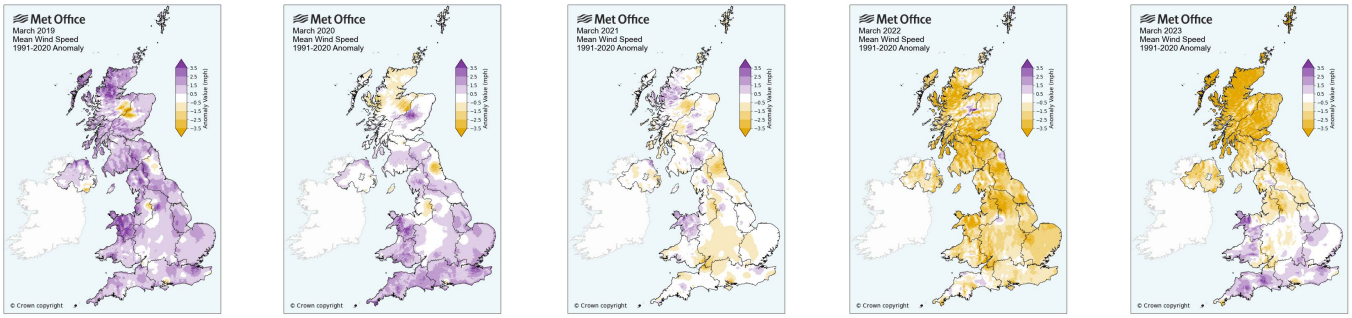
Long-term average wind speed (1-month)

This page shows the long-term average wind speed across the UK applicable to the 1-month Outlook period.



Average wind speed for March based on observations of past years.

Last 5 years wind speed, difference from average (1-month)



Mar 2019 | Mar 2020 | Mar 2021 | Mar 2022 | Mar 2023

Anomaly (mph)

< -3.5 | -3.5 to -2.5 | -2.5 to -1.5 | -1.5 to -0.5 | -0.5 to 0.5 | 0.5 to 1.5 | 1.5 to 2.5 | 2.5 to 3.5 | > 3.5

These maps show how March wind speed in the last five years differed from the long-term average wind speeds shown above in the upper panel. Yellow colours indicate calmer-than-average conditions while purple shades indicate windier-than-average conditions. Detailed information on the climate of the UK is available at www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate.

Q&As

Q. What is the point of the Outlook, who is it meant for?
A. This Outlook is produced for planners in government and business who make risk-based decisions. These users are aware of the complexities of this type of outlook and will include those factors in their decision-making process.

Q. How did you decide on the Outlook? What are the main factors affecting it?
A. It is based on information from observations, several numerical prediction systems and expert judgement. See the 'Outlook in Context' section of the Outlook for more details.

Q. Is the Outlook for the whole country?
A. The Outlook is for the average of conditions over the UK as a whole. Regional deviations from the UK-average can occur. For example, average UK precipitation can result from below-average rainfall for the northwest and above-average for the southeast.

Q. How confident are you in this Outlook?
A. The percentages in the 'Likelihood of Impact' sections of the Outlook give the level of confidence.

Q. With the chance of wet conditions similar to normal are we likely to see more flooding this spring?

A. Although the chance of wet weather in this period is similar to normal, given the wet weather so far this winter, there remains an increased chance of impacts from heavy rain. The Outlook cannot specify the severity, location, duration, or timings of specific weather events and therefore details of any potential impacts. Keep up to date with the latest National Severe Weather Warnings and forecast information for your area on our forecast pages and check the risk of flooding in your areas via the Environment Agency, SEPA, Natural Resources Wales and NI Direct websites.

Q. With only a slight increase in the chance of above average temperatures will we see hot weather this spring?
A. The chance of a cold March is close to normal, although cold weather impacts, such as ice and snow, remain possible. The percentage likelihood of warm conditions is slightly higher than normal during the 3-month period (25%), but not significantly so. Therefore, we consider the spring period has essentially a normal chance of being warm.

About the Outlook

The Outlook presented here is for United Kingdom as a whole and is based on information from observations, several numerical prediction systems and expert judgement. It is updated monthly to reflect the latest information on global weather patterns and their effect on the UK. The Outlook is designed to be used in conjunction with shorter-range forecasts – detailed weather forecast information is available on the Met Office website.

In this product, temperature refers to the average of daytime maxima and night-time minima. Wind speed refers to the average wind speed at a height of 10 metres. All numerical values relate to averages (temperature, wind speed) or totals (precipitation – rain, sleet, snow and hail) over 1 or 3 months, which are further averaged over the UK land area as a whole. Normal likelihood and long-term averages are established using the period 1991-2020.

Find out more

- UK 3-month Outlook user guidance page:
  https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/services/government/contingency-planners/user-guidance/user-guidance
- Explainers on climate drivers (such as the El Niño Southern Oscillation and North Atlantic Oscillation) that influence seasonal forecasts and the impacts they can have on UK weather:
  https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/services/government/contingency-planners/seasonal-forecasts-and-climate-drivers-resources
- Contingency planners page:
  https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/services/government/contingency-planners/index

Contact us

Website:
www.metoffice.gov.uk

Email:
enquiries@metoffice.gov.uk

Provide your feedback

We would like to hear your feedback on the UK 3-month Outlook to understand how it is being used. Please fill in the short form using this link or QR code to share your thoughts.